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(Original Signature of Member)

116TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

**H. R.** \_\_\_\_\_

To facilitate the re-opening of schools through study of children's role in transmitting SARS-CoV-2, and for other purposes.

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. GONZALEZ of Ohio introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**A BILL**

To facilitate the re-opening of schools through study of children's role in transmitting SARS-CoV-2, and for other purposes.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the "Protect our Children  
5       from COVID-19 Act".

6       **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7       Congress finds the following:

1           (1) School closures have substantial negative ef-  
2           fects on children’s education, mental health, and so-  
3           cial development.

4           (2) In general, school closures compound in-  
5           equalities in rural and low-income communities,  
6           where students often lack access to computers and  
7           high-speed internet.

8           (3) Returning children to the classroom will not  
9           only facilitate their development, but also free up  
10          their adult caregivers as they return to work.

11          (4) To date, scientific evidence suggests chil-  
12          dren have a lower probability of developing a serious  
13          illness from COVID–19 than adults. It remains un-  
14          clear, however, what role children play in transmit-  
15          ting SARS–CoV–2.

16          (5) Pursuing research that analyzes and under-  
17          stands the transmissibility of SARS–CoV–2 in chil-  
18          dren will help families, educators, and elected lead-  
19          ers make better decisions on re-opening schools and  
20          our economy.

21   **SEC. 3. STUDY ON CHILDREN’S ROLE IN TRANSMITTING**  
22                   **SARS–COV–2.**

23          (a) STUDY.—

24           (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than August 1,  
25          2020, the Secretary of Health and Human Services

1 (in this section referred to as the “Secretary”), in  
2 coordination with the heads of agencies of the De-  
3 partment of Health and Human Services and ex-  
4 perts from outside of the Department, as appro-  
5 priate, shall complete a study on children’s role in  
6 transmitting SARS-CoV-2.

7 (2) ISSUES TO BE STUDIED.—The study under  
8 paragraph (1) shall address—

9 (A) the transmissibility of COVID-19 from  
10 child to child, child to adult, and adult to child;

11 (B) the vulnerability of children, especially  
12 those with underlying health conditions, to se-  
13 vere illness as such vulnerability relates to  
14 COVID-19;

15 (C) the vulnerability of adults, especially  
16 those with underlying health conditions, who  
17 send their children back to school; and

18 (D) the vulnerability of adults, especially  
19 those with underlying health conditions, who  
20 interact with children who may be asymp-  
21 tomatic but infectious.

22 (3) CONSIDERATIONS.—In carrying out the  
23 study under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall—

1 (A) take into consideration the best avail-  
2 able science, including as provided by the Na-  
3 tional Academy of Sciences; and

4 (B) ensure that such study includes con-  
5 sideration of children who are members of ra-  
6 cial or ethnic minority groups.

7 (b) REPORTING.—Not later than August 1, 2020,  
8 and quarterly thereafter through the end of the emergency  
9 period, the Secretary shall submit a report to the Congress  
10 on children’s role in transmitting SARS–CoV–2. The first  
11 such report shall include the results of the study under  
12 subsection (a).

13 (c) DISSEMINATION OF BEST PRACTICES.—Not later  
14 than August 1, 2020, and quarterly thereafter through the  
15 end of the emergency period, the Secretary shall dissemi-  
16 nate to stakeholders best practices for protecting children  
17 and adults in educational settings. The first best practices  
18 disseminated pursuant to the preceding sentence shall in-  
19 clude any best practices for protecting children and adults  
20 in educational settings identified through the study under  
21 subsection (a).

22 (d) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “emer-  
23 gency period” has the meaning given to such term in sec-  
24 tion 1135(g)(1)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.  
25 1320b–5(g)(1)(B)).